

# **Engineering Heritage Australia Bulletin: #21**

## **15 June 2022**

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### **Heritage Action Plan 2022 - 2025 for the Sydney Opera House (SOH)**

As the SOH, is approaching its 50th anniversary, a Heritage Action Plan 2022 - 2025 was issued to ensure that our heritage significance is conserved and celebrated for current and future generations.

It is of interest to us given our recent EHA / ASCE International Engineering Heritage Recognition.

It is interesting that “engineering” gets four mentions, while “architecture” gets five mentions - so we are getting close to the proper balance.

<https://www.sydneyoperahouse.com/general/corporate-information/heritage-action-plan.html>

*(From Frank Johnson)*

### **National Library of Australia: Wolfgang Sievers Collection**

The National Library holds an extensive and incredible collection of photographs by the eminent photographer Wolfgang Sievers (1913 - 2007), who fled Nazi Germany before the outbreak of the Second World War to make his home in Australia. Quoting from an article by Helen Innes in The National Library Magazine of September 2011:

“Through his striking images of the post-war manufacturing boom, he would go on to become of the country’s eminent photographers.

Sievers’ images celebrate the individuality of the worker and the excitement of the machine age. The photographer documented the height of Australian industry, recording places such as textile mills, match factories and treatment plants - many of them long since gone. In these places, Sievers found unexpected beauty and virtue, forming an invaluable record of Australian history, people and culture.

His photography championed the spirit and principles of the modern age, especially functionalism, purity of design and objectivity.

Perhaps the most striking quality of his images is the sense of certainty and optimism they embody, for they express no doubts about the future. Their vision thus seems worlds away from contemporary concerns about the negative effects of technology, pollution, environmental degradation and climate change.”

You can search for the images online at the National Library website, using <https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Search/Home>.

I put in Wolfgang Sievers and ticked “pictures” in the Current Search Limits box, and was greeted by an amazing array of photos, which I am sure would appeal to anyone interested in engineering heritage. However, be warned that you may need plenty of time, for the search came up with no less than 10,989 results.

*(From Frank Johnson)*

### **EHA Magazine, May 2022 issue has been issued**

The latest edition of EHA Magazine has been issued. Thanks to the editor, Margret Doring.

Refer to the link below:

[https://www.engineersaustralia.org.au/sites/default/files/Learned%20Society/EHA\\_Magazine\\_Vol4\\_No2\\_May\\_2022\\_0.pdf](https://www.engineersaustralia.org.au/sites/default/files/Learned%20Society/EHA_Magazine_Vol4_No2_May_2022_0.pdf)

*(From William Phippen)*

### **Adaptive re-use of Balls Head coal loader – an interesting upcoming webinar in June**

The Balls Head Coal Loader site at Waverton in Sydney is a striking example of how engineering has changed Sydney Harbour over the past two centuries and how it is still changing. The historic Balls Head site has developed from one of striking natural beauty, through the construction and operation of a dust laden coal loader, to now a centre for sustainability and public enjoyment. Thus, while the Balls Head Coal Loader is a significant example of engineering heritage, it is also an excellent case study in heritage engineering, outlining the challenges and engineering innovation in repurposing it from an abandoned site into a vibrant community facility. In recognition of its significance, the Coal Loader was formally added to the NSW State Heritage Register in 2021.

EA is holding an interesting upcoming webinar about it on the 20<sup>th</sup> June. For more details and to register refer to the link below:

<https://www.engineersaustralia.org.au/node/71011>

*(From Margret Doring)*

## **The construction of the three narrows Bridges in Perth – another interesting upcoming webinar in June**

The Narrows Bridge is a well-known iconic landmark in Perth and provides a vital link in the north-south road and rail transport corridor for the city. However, not many people may realise that the 'bridge' actually consists of three separate bridges, designed and built in completely different eras and with completely different construction techniques. The original Narrows Bridge was designed in the UK and became the first prestressed concrete bridge to be built in Australia. While its design and construction methodologies may be regarded as primitive by today's standards, they were cutting edge and state of the art at the time.

A second bridge was conceived in the 1990s to cater for the massive increase in traffic volumes and to carry the northbound traffic. The design and construction techniques used for the second bridge were in stark contrast to those used on the first bridge, yet the final product achieved the design brief of visually matching the original bridge, with only subtle differences, visible only to the trained eye of an engineer. The third bridge, carrying the southbound rail line, was built in between the two road bridges in 2007. For practical reasons, the structure was steel, in response to the significant challenge to construct the bridge in between two operating road bridges.

This presentation will discuss the history of the three bridges, their design and construction methods and contrast their differences according to the eras in which they were built.

EA is holding this webinar on the 28<sup>th</sup> June. For more details and to register refer to the link below:

<https://www.engineersaustralia.org.au/event/2022/01/construction-three-narrows-bridges-perth-40956>

*(From Gerry Hofmann)*

## **Museum of Fire has been included in the new Penrith Heritage Walk**

The walk invites visitors and residents to discover, at their own pace, the people, places and open spaces that have helped shape Penrith. It guides you to 22 points of interest on an 11-kilometre trail from Penrith Train Station, through Thornton, and along with the river finishing at Emu Plains Train Station.

A mobile-friendly interactive map here

<https://www.visitpenrith.com.au/things-to-do/arts-culture-heritage/penrith-heritage-walk>

The museum of fire is located in a heritage-listed building which was originally a power station before it is changed to the fire museum in 1986.

*(From Firas Shawash)*

**Contributions needed**

*Readers are invited to share news, bright ideas, issues of concern, advice about online talks – anything that would be of interest and helpful to others, by sending them to editor Firas Shawash at [fshawash@yahoo.com](mailto:fshawash@yahoo.com) for inclusion in the next Bulletin - more Australia-wide content would be appreciated.*

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